

El Globo Nuevo
1502 East Madison Street
Brownsville
Cameron County
Texas

HABS No. TX-3276

HABS
TEX,
31-BROWN,
8-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20243

EL GLOBO NUEVO

HABS TEX, 30-BROWN, 8-

Location: 1502 East Madison Street, Brownsville, (Formerly HABS TEX, 30-BROWN 8-
Cameron County, Texas. 8-
USGS East Brownsville Quadrangle, Universal Transverse
Mercator Coordinates: 14/650980/2865400.

Present Owner: Ubaldo Barredo, 828 E. 15th Street, Brownsville, Texas.

Present Occupant: Multiple, unidentified, tenants.

Present Use: Storage and warehouse.

Significance: El Globo Nuevo is typical of nineteenth-century Rio Grande Valley commercial structures whose plain brick facades are highlighted by denticulated cornices and openings grouped into bays by simple pilasters. The first of several sections was completed in 1897, and the rest of the structure was completed before 1914. This complex was one of several locations of El Globo stores run by the Garza brothers, two Mexican citizens who lived in Brownsville.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Dates of erection: In the parapet over the central pier there is a block with the date "1897" in raised brick, in what is the oldest part of the structure. Two subsequent additions had been completed by 1914.
2. Architect: None known.
3. Original and subsequent owners: El Globo Nuevo is built on the northeastern portion of lots 4, 5, and 6 of Block B in the Original Townsite of Brownsville. The following references to the title of these lots are found at the Brownsville Title Company, Brownsville, Texas. The Deed Records are filed in the Cameron County Clerk's Office, Brownsville, as follows:
 - 1894 Warranty Deed, May 7, 1894, recorded in Book K, pages 42-43. Adolfo (also spelled Adolpho) Garza bought lots 5 and 6 from the New York Brownsville Improvement Company for \$350.
 - 1896 Warranty Deed, November 10, 1896, recorded in Book K, pages 637-638. Adolfo Garza bought Lot 4 from Prince Merry for \$150. (This is the same price at which Prince Merry bought the lot in 1892 from the New York Brownsville Improvement Company.)

After Adolfo Garza's death the property eventually passed to the current owner, Ubaldo Barrera, who is Garza's wife's nephew. He lives in a house adjacent to El Globo Nuevo, and built before it.

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: Not known. The H. M. Field Papers (See Field-Pacheco Complex, TX-3277) show that Garza ordered considerable merchandise from Field, so it is possible that Field may have supplied some of the materials for the building since he was in the business of selling lumber and building supplies.
5. Original plans, construction, etc.: El Globo Nuevo is only a part of what was once a commercial and residential complex, located on three lots at the south corner of E. 15th and E. Madison streets. The entire complex is shown on the 1914 Sanborn Map of Brownsville. The residential part of the original complex--the dwelling which faces northwest on E. 15th Street, was built before El Globo Nuevo, and according to its owner and occupant, Ubaldo Barrera, was the earliest building of the complex. The dwelling appears on the Site Plan of El Globo Nuevo, HABS No. TX-3276, and is described briefly under "Site and Surroundings." The principal part of the original complex is the warehouse/store, El Globo Nuevo, which occupies the northeast edge of the property extending approximately one hundred fifty feet along East Madison Street. It was constructed in three or four stages. The northern portion of El Globo Nuevo, at the corner of E. 15th Street and E. Madison, was erected, according to its cornice plaque, in 1897. The central portion, behind it, to the southeast, was added next. The remaining portion of El Globo Nuevo, continuing to the back property line, was constructed last.

Sheet 8 of the March 1914 Sanborn Map of Brownsville, Texas, shows a "General Store" running the full length of the property along Madison Street, as all three had been constructed by that time. It also shows outbuildings along with warehouses on the southeastern edge of the property. El Globo Nuevo was not in the areas surveyed by the earlier Sanborn maps.

6. Addition and alterations: The map shows a wooden overhang extending the full length of the store on 15th Street, and approximately 2/3 of the length of the store on Madison Street. According to Mr. Barrera, this was torn down when the streets were paved.

Painted numbers on door shutters which appear in the photographs have no relation to the street address.

7. Historical Events and Persons Associated with the Structure:

Adolfo Garza was a Mexican citizen who had his residence and business in Brownsville. The 1913 Brownsville City Directory lists him as vice president of the J. S. & M. H. Cross Lumber Company of Brownsville, as well as a purveyor of general merchandise.

Adolfo(Adolpho) Garza was married to Virginia Berrera whose sister was Ubaldo Barreda's mother. Garza's brother was Manuel Garza who was Barreda's maternal grandmother's second husband. Thus these Garza brothers were married to mother and daughter, the grandmother an aunt of the present owners. El Globo Nuevo sold general merchandise, most of it imported from New Orleans and New York. Much of the goods was European. This merchandise was sold primarily to people living across the river in Matamoros, Mexico.

Drygoods and groceries were sold in the northern portion of the building at the corner of 15th and Madison streets. Shoes were sold in the central portion of the building. The remaining southeastern portion of the building along 15th Street as well as the buildings along the southeastern edge of the property were used as warehouses.

El Globo Nuevo was the second location from which the Garzas sold general merchandise. The first location was called El Globo Chiquito (The Little Globe, a structure with some possibility of having been built in 1887 because that date is described as having been painted somewhere on the Monroe Street facade. See El Globo Chiquito, HABS No. TX-3275.) That structure had been leased to the Garza brothers by James Browne, the owner and builder. It was situated two blocks away from the Rio Grande Railroad Station at E. 11th and E. Van Buren streets. From this location they moved to El Globo Nuevo about the turn of the century.

After 1920 the Garzas moved their store to the east corner of 12th and E. Monroe streets, where they called it El Globo Segundo, or The Second Globe. In 1923 the Garzas dissolved their business. In that same year Adolfo died, and Manuel Garza died in 1926. The building housing El Globo Segundo became the present Iglesia Evangelica Lutheran (Mexican Lutheran Church.) The relative, Ubaldo Barredo, returned to the location of El Globo Nuevo where he runs the store and lives in the adjacent and historically related house.

C. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

H. M. Field Papers, University of Texas Archives, Barker Texas History Center, University of Texas, Austin, Texas. These papers, which are from H. M. Field's business records, contain information on goods ordered by Adolpho Garza.

Interview with Mr. Ubaldo Barreda, 828 East 15th Street, Brownsville, Texas, on June 29, 1977. Mr. Barreda furnished the information on the physical history of El Globo Nuevo property as well as an account of the store's operation. He also provided information on Adolpho Garza.

Interview with Domingo Laiseca, Mariano Laiseca, and Dominica Laiseca of 925 E. 11th Street, Brownsville, Texas, on July 18, 1977. The Laisecas are the owners of the Laiseca Store, formerly El Globo Chiquito. The Laisecas contributed information about both El Clobo Chiquito and El Globo Segundo.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Brownsville City Directory. Asheville, North Carolina: Miller's Piedmont Directory Company, 1913-14 (Vol. I).

Sanborn Map of Brownsville, Texas, dated March 1914. Sheet 8 of the Map shows Block B, lots 4, 5, and 6.

Prepared by: Betty Bird
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Project Historian
1977

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This commercial building displaying a denticulated brick cornice, is another example of early structures in this area.
2. Condition of fabric: Fair.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: This one-story, L-shaped building is approximately one hundred fifty feet along its 10-bay, East Madison Street front, and fifty feet across its four-bay end on E. 15th Street. Its second door, numbered 1502, serves for the East Madison Street address for the entire building.
2. Foundation: Brick.
3. Wall construction, finish and color: Pinkish tan brick, laid in common bond. [In the first two-thirds of the structure, the walls have been both patch-plastered and patch painted, and the work was in poor condition when the building was measured. At the time the photographs were taken, several months later, the brick walls had been freshly stuccoed over, leaving only the parapets and denticulated cornices untouched.]
4. Structural system, framing: Load-bearing brick walls and frame construction.

5. Porches, stoops, bulkheads, etc.: A concrete step extends continuously across the northeast facade. The iron hangers and the flashing reglet still exist where there was once a roof over the northwest and northeast facades.

An L-shaped porch is on the southwest side of the building. It has a brick floor, pent roof with standing seam metal covering, and a brick low wall with diagonal wood lattice panels above.

6. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: There are nine doorways and one window on the long northeast facade of the two sections of the structure (seven on the older portion) opening into a series of rooms.

Each doorway has a pair of double raised wood panel doors with the top two-panel section removable. Wood surrounds and sills are at each doorway. There is a flat brick arch lintel, plastered over above each doorway and a three-light transom panel with iron bars (vertical) over the doors. The removable panels lock in place with a metal thumb latch at the bottom of the panel. There are three large butt hinges on each door, and decorated metal top and bottom bolts and hand pulls.

There is a large arched opening near the middle of the northeast facade that has been filled with vertical wood boards (exterior) and plywood (interior) above a pair of plywood doors. The doors are flanked on each side by a four-over-four double-hung side light with vertical wood paneling below. There is an interior, arched, vertical-barred transom above. On the inside at each side of the opening is a splayed brick buttress pier with a reverse corbeling from its midpoint up to just above the springing line of the arch. Beyond, there is another doorway on the northeast facade near the southeast end that has a brick flat arch lintel and a pair of wood shutters, with vertical wood paneling on the exterior face and diagonal wood paneling on the interior face. The opening is filled in with plywood and a single flush wood door.

Opening onto the rear and to the porch are several pairs of wood panel doors with wood surrounds and transom panel above.

- b. Windows and shutters: There is a wooden window near the end of the northeast facade that appears to have been cut into the wall at a later date. It has a one-over-one light, with double-hung sash, wood surrounds, and sill. There are several six-over-six light, double-hung, wooden sash windows in the sheet metal additions at the rear.

There are two wooden projected sash windows with wooden surrounds and iron bars across the exterior on the southwest facade.

There are six-over-six light, double-hung, wooden sashes and vertical wood shutters on windows in the store room on the roof.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The flat roof, with some slope to it, has a cover of built-up asphalt roofing material. A brick parapet extends around three sides of the building. A portion of a metal gutter and downspout exist on the southwest facade.
- b. Cornice, eaves: The roof without the parapet has an open cornice. The cornice described with the wall construction is the most important part of each facade, with its molded brick denticulated or corbel-like projections.
- c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: For storage space a wood shingled hipped roof has been built on top of the flat roof on the brick building. There are four dormer windows also set into this hipped roof, and their sides and faces are also covered with wood shingles.

C. Description of the Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. First floor: There are two entrances on the northwest facade to one of the store rooms. This room leads into a room on the rear through a double opening and to a large room on the northeast through a large arched opening. The northeast room has two openings on the northwest and one on the northeast. Each room leads into another room through a double opening. Three rooms to the southeast behind one another each have two double openings on the northeast facade. Beyond these three rooms to the southeast is another large room that has a large arched opening on the northeast that has been filled in with a doorway and panels. On the opposite wall of this room is another large arched opening leading to a shed storage room. At the extreme southeast end is a living quarter. (This was inaccessible for HABS recording.)
 - b. Second floor: There is a second-floor dormer storage near the center of the building, provided by the roof addition. It has a dormer window in the center of each hip of the roof.
2. Stairway: The open-string, wooden, quarter-turn stairway leads from near the center of the building to the second-floor storage level. A simple wooden railing extends from a simple wooden newel to a newel at the landing and continues to the second level, turning and extending around the opening. There is a railing across the other side of the landing that extends up on the other side of the stairway to the

second floor and joins the railing around the opening. The first run of the stairway is enclosed with vertical wood paneling and the upper run is exposed to the room.

3. Flooring: The floors are ca. 3-inch wood boards.
4. Walls and ceiling finish: The walls are brick, painted, and the ceilings are wood with tongue-and-lip joint, painted. The exposed ceiling joists have a quirk on each side. The walls and ceilings in the second-floor storage room are exposed structure of wood. The walls in some of the rear additions are exposed sheet iron above a low brick sill wall.
5. Doorways and doors: Double interior doors are wood, vertical boards on one side and diagonal boards on the other. There are wood surrounds, flat brick arch lintels, and some have three-light transoms with vertical iron bars.
6. Mechanical equipment:
 - a. Heating: There is no heating system.
 - b. Electricity: There is industrial lighting in some rooms and others have no electric lighting at all.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: El Globo Nuevo sits on the south corner of the intersection of E. 15th and E. Madison streets, its long side facing northeast on E. Madison, its short side facing northwest on E. 15th Street. A concrete sidewalk extends around the northeast and the northwest sides of the site. Across East Madison Street there are residential quarters to the northeast, and across 15th Street to the northwest there is a small hotel. A small service station lies directly behind the southeast wall or back property line of El Globo Nuevo.

Within the site, in the ell of the structure, there is a blunted T-shaped patio of brick, somewhat overgrown with vegetation, with brick-edged growing beds, and a closed-up cistern near the center of the patio. The cistern, built up above grade in the center with brick, has a large circular, brick covering sloping from its center to the surface of the patio. Along the southwest side of the patio there is a brick grille-work boundary wall separating the store site from a dwelling property (once part of the original complex) next door.

2. Outbuildings for El Globo Nuevo: The warehouse site contains but one outbuilding--a small wooden outhouse with shed roof, housing a toilet, and located in the patio near one of the rear entrances.

3. Related structures: Shown on the architectural drawings of the Site Plan, but not recorded photographically, is the earliest structure built for the original complex. This is the dwelling next door at 828 E. 15th Street, the home of the owner of El Globo Nuevo, and a relative of the Garza family, Ubaldo Barredo. This house is of plastered brick, with gable roof, open cornice, and jigsaw work on the rafters. A porch on the front has wooden arches with restrained jigsaw trim on brick columns. There are two brick chimneys and the brick hood and sill of the windows are plastered. There is a plastered brick water table on the Barredo house.

A wooden porch on the rear of the Barredo house connects it to a former brick dining-room building. A covered walkway leads from the dining-room building to the original brick kitchen building, which is now a storage room. It has a flat roof and two pairs of double doors on the northwest and southeast facades. All buildings of the Barredo dwelling group are of load-bearing brick and frame construction.

For the Barredo house there is also a brick patio, also with a cistern, shown in a photograph to resemble the description of that for El Globo Nuevo.

A small brick gable-roofed privy in the Barredo house patio is shown on the El Globo Nuevo Site Plan, and appears also in the photographs in order to illustrate typical brickwork of the area. The privy sits to the east and rear of the Barredo dwelling house. It has a long wooden louvre beneath each gable end, and a pair of long wooden louvres on the southeast side. Two doors open into the northwest side. The gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles, and the cornice is open. Pilasters at each corner create a recessed brick wall panel much in the manner of the El Globo Nuevo walls, by corbeling inward at their three upper brick courses.

At the southwest edge of the Barredo dwelling there is a brick storage building, in poor condition, with part of the roof missing. Its southwest facade is sheet iron on a brick water table.

There are numerous large trees in the yard of the Barredo house, and very heavy vegetation. Most of the yard around the house is paved with brick, and there is an iron grille fence sitting on a low brick wall extending across the southwest or front of the property on E. 15th Street. A high brick fence with sloping top extends along the alley on the southwest property line.

Prepared by: John P. White
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PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

At the suggestion of a national preservation consultant, Ellen Beasley, this project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) and the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, in cooperation with the Brownsville Historical Association and the Brownsville City Planning Department. Under the direction of John Poppeliers, Chief of HABS, the project was completed during the summer of 1977 at the Historic American Buildings Survey field office, Brownsville, Texas, by John P. White (Associate Professor, Texas Technological University) Project Supervisor; Betty Bird (University of Virginia) Project Historian; and Student Assistant Architects Scott Deneroff (University of Maryland), Susan Dornbusch (University of Virginia), Matthew Lowry (University of Pennsylvania), Eduardo Luaces (University of Florida), and Alan Willig (the City College of the City University of New York). Special assistance and support were provided to the HABS team by Mrs. Mary Simmons, Mrs. Sally Fleming, Miss Theresa Champion, and Mr. Calvin Walker of the Brownsville Historical Association; and by Mr. Mario Moreno, Mr. Richard Waldman, Mrs. Graciela Salinas, and Mr. Larry Brown of the Brownsville City Planning Department. Archival photographs of the project were made in February 1979 by Bill Engdahl, of Hedrich-Blessing, Chicago, Illinois. Editing and final preparation of the documentation was carried out in the HABS Washington office by Lucy Pope Wheeler of the HABS professional staff.